

A trellis fence.

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Several pairs of small nails had failed. A slat was sticking out of the latticework into the area next to the bus stop where we usually stood. It was attached to the fence at the bottom, but curved from under its own weight or from sun damage or because the natural grain of the wood wanted to bend that way and only being connected into all the other pieces held it straight until now. One of us stepped out of the way of a scooter going past and bumped into it and it bounced up and down for quite some time.

The next day, it was gone.

The next day, the piece next to it had disappeared, exposing a dozen parallel pieces of wood and a dozen slanted rectangles each with a small picture of part of the house behind the fence.

After the weekend there was a diamond hole, over four times as large as the original diamond holes, which drew our attention into a window with curtains drawn.

The trellis had never hidden what was behind the fence. We all knew there was a house there. If we thought about it we could have told you the house was blue. But would we have ever noticed the specific off white colour of curtains that only comes from hanging in a room for a long time?

Day by day the holes in the trellis got bigger. Another large diamond appeared that pointed to a dirty window frame, then the larger diamond turned into a large parallelogram that showed us both the side and bottom of a sash window. There was texture to the blue paint from a rushed repaint from a long time ago that had since cracked in the sun.

Someone must have walked past this trellis every day and saw wasted potential, never used by a climbing plant. Once the first piece came loose of its own accord, it set them off. Every day they took a piece to rebuild in their back garden. Piece by piece from the pieces. Using specific tools to make specific angles so it criss-crossed to make equal little diamonds for a plant to snake onto and in between. By now there should be enough pieces to give it the structural integrity it needed, because that was no longer the case with the old trellis. The old trellis did not have enough of itself for the tiny pairs of nails to hold the structure in place. The previously parallel pieces were now heading in slightly different directions. The holes were no longer just different sizes, but irregular shapes, and the slats bent out into the area next to the bus stop intimidating us with sharp threats of exposed pairs of small nails.

The darkening mornings took the fences job of holding the image of the

house from the public. The colour of the curtains through the large irregular diamonds became less specific, just some sort of white.

One day there were no diamonds. Instead two rectangles separated by a swaying slat hanging attached only to the top part of the frame. Tiny nails outward facing daring us to touch them.

The next day, gone.

The house was blue, as we had always known. The window frames, white. Curtains, a different white. Other than that we couldn't see, like a phone screen set to minimum brightness.

The weekend went by and we fell back an hour and now the morning scene was fully visible. A white window frame, speckled with black bits of something. Even though they were pulled right across, the curtains were a wavy shape. Extra curtain in case the window ever grew. Blue painted weatherboards. Some brush strokes were visible, but no more than any other paint job when inspected closely. The window frame was only a little dirty and the curtains weren't stained by cigarette smoke or mould, but instead the off white could have just come like that. It was disappointing, like an old faded jigsaw puzzle bought as a joke from an op shop that turned out quite beautiful upon completion.

After work we, a different group, got off the bus in the new evening dark. I hung back to not walk alongside the evening bus strangers who were heading in the same direction. When the bus left the stop, I looked across the road to a golden light framed by an empty fence. Curtains open, the room was more yellow than I had ever dared to imagine. In the centre of the room a bed, made but creased. The duvet was a bright warm grey with diagonal stripes of charcoal where the light was blocked by gentle rolls. And at the end of the room, facing the back wall, sitting at a long desk in a dining chair, in a maroon hoodie, their shoulders slumped, neck bent and head facing down, a person.